



March 21, 2006

(Online at <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a27/enewsletter.htm>)

Investment Package for Schools, Affordable Housing, Transportation, Parks & Levees Fails to Make June Ballot

In January Governor Schwarzenegger launched the legislative year with a call for massive state bond investment in California's schools, highways, levees and water supply. After weeks of negotiations and hearings, cooperation between Democratic legislators and the Governor created a public works investment package that added affordable housing, parklands and mass transit to the Governor's original proposal—for a considerably reduced price tag.

Unfortunately, the legislature this past week failed to approve any part of that bond package for the June ballot. The Assembly *did* approve an education and levee bond package. However, the Senate did not agree.

Missing the deadline for June was not for a lack of effort. It was very intense at the Capitol throughout the process. In the days and hours before the final vote, I was deeply involved in numerous negotiation sessions with the Governor and various legislators. And it seemed as if every lobbyist within 100 miles was in the Capitol advocating for a position on the bond package, adding to the challenge.

I am disappointed the bond package didn't move ahead. California had a big opportunity to address the additional nine million people the Governor projected to live in the state in twenty years. We need the investments the bond would have provided in affordable housing, mass transit, levee protection, water development, roads, natural resources and schools.

The defeated bond was also a very "green" bond. It would have provided for enviro-friendly school facilities, emission retrofits for school buses, air quality mitigation, additional parks, farmland preservation, and water quality improvements for smaller, failing water systems.

So what happens now? There is potential that a bond package could go on the November ballot, but that would be very difficult because the Governor's race will be on the ballot at the same time and the politics surrounding that will present a challenge.

The fact that the Governor and Assembly Democrats came to agreement, yet the Governor couldn't deliver any votes among Assembly Republicans – bodes poorly for getting a good bond package for November.

Though I am disappointed the bond package will not be on the June ballot, I will continue to work with Assembly Speaker Nunez and my legislative colleagues to see if we can do something that provides a real investment in California's future.

New Laird Legislation:

AB 3029, Food Stamp Simplification Act

By cutting red tape and reducing complexity, AB 3029 will increase access to food for 2 million Californians. To learn more, read the [press release](#) and the story in the [Santa Cruz Sentinel](#).

AB 2348, Pajaro River Flood Control

AB 2348 will split with the state the estimated \$50 million local cost for the proposed Pajaro River levee project, effectively reducing by 50% the local share for the approximately \$200 million project.

To learn more, read the [press release](#) and the stories in the [Register-Pajaronian](#), [Mid-County Post](#), [Monterey Herald](#) and [Salinas Californian](#).

To track John's bills, go to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>, click "Bill Information" and enter the bill number in the search box.

John in the District

3/24 Santa Cruz Bar Association Annual Dinner

3/25 Santa Clara County School Board Association Annual Legislative Brunch, Santa Clara

3/30 Children's Advocacy Institute, Santa Cruz

5/12 Monterey Peninsula College Government Class

[Listen](#) to John deliver the Assembly Democrats' Weekly Radio Address from Friday, March 10, or [read](#) the text.

[Listen](#) to John's comments about the bond package on KUSP's Sacramento Report.



Maria Elena Alcantar Named 27th A.D. Woman of the Year

I'm inspired by Maria Elena Alcantar's focus on creating a brighter future for her family and her co-workers. Maria Elena has worked tirelessly to improve working conditions at UCSC while building education opportunities for her children.

Maria Elena was recognized on the floor of the Assembly in a ceremony Monday, March 20. To learn more about Maria Elena, [click here](#).

If you're receiving this as a forwarded email and would like to receive regular Laird updates, please send an email with "Subscribe" in the subject line to Assemblymember.Laird-newsletter@assembly.ca.gov. If you would prefer to not receive email updates, please respond with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Community Colleges Recognize John

Health Services Association of
CA Community Colleges:
**Legislative Advocate for
Students Award**

CA Community College
Association for Occupational
Education: **2006 Legislator of
the Year**

John on the Radio— Spring 2006 Schedule

KSCO/1080-AM
Mondays, 8:10am

KUSP/88.9-FM
Wednesdays, 10:55am

KRXA/540-AM
Fridays, 5:05pm

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